News from the Wyoming Department of Health

Tuesday, August 22, 2006

Three More Fremont County Residents Infected with West Nile Virus

CHEYENNE ó Lab tests have confirmed that three more Fremont County residents have been infected with West Nile virus over the last month, according to the Wyoming Department of Health.

One woman was hospitalized in mid August with symptoms including severe headache, stiff neck, fever, chills, and abdominal pain. She was diagnosed with West Nile meningitis (or West Nile neuroinvasive disease) and is recovering at home since being released from the hospital after a five-day stay.

Two more Fremont County men, one of them older, have also been diagnosed with West Nile fever after lab confirmation of West Nile virus infection. Both experienced similar symptoms including fever, muscle pain and weakness.

õWith a total of six reported cases statewide by this point, we may be on track for a more active season for West Nile virus compared to last year,ö said Dr. Tracy Murphy, state epidemiologist for the Wyoming Department of Health. õWhile itæ difficult to truly predict the number of cases we might see for the rest of the season, it just makes sense for Wyoming residents to be cautious.ö

Last year 12 human cases were identified in Wyoming with two deaths. There were 393 human cases in 2003.

West Nile virus is a mosquito-borne disease that can cause a potentially serious illness in humans. Mosquitoes spread the virus after they feed on infected birds and then bite people, other birds and animals.

More information about helping to prevent mosquito bites is available on the web at www.badskeeter.org or by calling the West Nile virus hotline at: 1-877-WYO-BITE.

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